ACT AGAINST RVN-AWAYES.

Masterlesse men, and those who travels without testimonials.

At *EDINBVRGH* the twentie day of August 1640.

THE Lords, and others of the *Committie* of the Estates of Parliament; considering the fearfull prejudice and danger likely to fall out, by the daily disbanding and stealing away of a number of Fugitives, who flieth away from their Companies and Colours, and returneth to the Countrey where they lurke and are harboured, and entertained by their Parents, Masters, and Friends: The danger and preparative whereof may produce fearfull effects, if the same bee not timeously remeided, and such Fugitives and Run-awayes examplarly punished to the terrour of others, in respect whereof; It is hereby statute, enacted, and ordained, That the *Committie* of warre within each Presbyterie and division in this whole Kingdome, with the concourse of the Shyreffes, Stewarts, and Bailyies of Regalities, and of the Gentle-men, Ministers, Elders, and Constables in each Paroshin, who shall bee oblidged to concurre and assist herein-till; Shall foorth-with upon sight hereof, cause make present and exact search and tryall for all Fugitives and Run-awayes within their bounds and division, who hath either fled and disbanded from this present Armie, now marched into *England*, or from the North or South Regiments, or from any other Companie or Garison leveyed by warrand from the Estates: And shall cause take and apprehend all the saids Fugitives where ever they can be found, and put them in sure firmance and prison, either in the head Burrowes of the Shyres, or in some other firme and convenient place. And sike-like, It is hereby statute, that immediatly after the saids Fugitives shall be so apprehended, at least within eight dayes thereafter: The saids *Committies* of warre with concourse of the Magistrates of the saids Burrowes, or Shyreffes of the Shyre, or Stewarts of Stewartries, or Bailyies of Regalities, shall cause decimate the saids whole Fugitives, and shall cause hang the tenth man of them: And if there be but one or moe of them within ten: That they cause hang one of the said number, albeit there be but one: And if there bee fifteene of them, that two of them be hanged: And so forth that one be hanged of every tenth persons within each Shyre or division; And if they bee under the number of ten, as is above prescribed, that one of them be hanged, as said is, and that without favour or mercie: And that it bee decided by lot, who of them shall bee so hanged; And these on whom the lot falleth, to die according to the proportion foresaid, shall bee put to execution, and die the death, as is above prescribed without favour. And as for all the rest, who shall hapen to escape by lot, Ordaines them to be all sent here to *Edinburgh* bound as Fugitives to bee disposed upon, at the pleasure of the said *Committie* of Estates, their intertainment, after they shall bee apprehended, and the charges in sending of them here, to bee upon the expenses of the publicke, if they bee not able to entertaine themselves. And if any of the Parents, Masters, Friends, or acquaintance of the saids Fugitives, shall hereafter recept, harbour, or entertaine, or furnish any of them, being delated, & proven before the Kirk Session, or *Committie* of war. The saids recepters shal be punished in their persons and means, conforme to the former acts made there-anent. And notwithstanding of the premisses, if any of the saids Fugitives before they bee apprehended in manner foresaid, shall come and offer themselves, to the *Committie* of warre within their division, or to the Conveener thereof, or to the Ministers and Elders of the Parosh, or some man of qualitie, and crave their passe to come here to *Edinburgh*, and offer themselves to the censure of the *Committie* of Estates: And shall accordingly appeare here with all expedition, that such persons as shall so appeare here, and submit themselves in manner foresaids, their lives shall bee saved, and such course taken with them, as the said *Committie* of Estates shall thinke expedient. And sike-like, this present Act anent the saids Fugitives to have full force and execution against all Fugitives and Run-awayes, who shall hereafter disband and flee in time comming from any Companie or Regiment hereafter to bee leavyed in any part of this Kingdome by warrand from the Estates or *Committie* thereof. And in like manner, the said *Committie* of Estates considering that the Countrey is abused and burdened with a number of idle and masterlesse men, and vagabounds, having no settled calling, vocation, nor imployment, who may prove noysome to the Countrey, if they bee not represſed. Therefore it is statute and ordained, that where ever any idle or masterlesse men can bee found, not having a lawfull calling, and constant residence, and wanting a lawfull testimoniall of the Minister and Elders of the Parosh, or some Gentle-man of note and respect, or Magistrates of Burrows where hee dwelleth, that they shall bee taken, apprehended, and put in the neareſt prison, and shall remaine therein, till they bee disposed upon at the will of the saids *Committies* of warre, where they are taken for the service of the publicke. And further, it is statute and ordained, that no person whatsoever, shall presume to travell from his owne bounds, without a lawfull testimoniall in maner foresaid. And if any man or woman shall be found travelling from their owne bounds, wanting a testimoniall (except they bee persons of respect and qualitie, notourly knowne in these bounds where they shall travell) It is hereby statute, that they shall be imprisoned at the neareſt Jayle or Firmance for the space of eight dayes, and thereafter shall bee carried from Parosh to Parosh by Constables, or others who shall be appointed for that effect, till they bee brought to their owne residence, where they shall be examplarly punished for their contempt of this statute: Requiring hereby all the *Committies* of war, Shyreffes, Magistrates, and others to whom the execution of these above-written statutes is incumbent: And to whose knowledge the same shall come, as they will be answereable upon their higheſt paine, that they, and every one of them exactly prosecute and execute the same statutes: And for better effectuating hereof, that they appoint qualified persons in each paroshin, for bringing in, taking and apprehending the saids Run-awayes, idle and masterlesse men, Anent the which whole premisses, these presents shall bee unto them, and everie one of them a sufficient warrand.

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